

WASHINGTON, DC (October 27, 2009) – The House Intelligence Committee’s investigation into reporting practices of the Intelligence Community took a major step forward today when Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-IL, chairwoman House Intelligence Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations, outlined the five phase investigation and described the essential elements of the committee’s probe.

“This investigation is being conducted in a thoughtful and thorough manner; our findings will make Americans safer and more secure, and will improve the ability of the intelligence community to achieve their mission,” said Rep. Schakowsky.

Over the next several months, Rep. Schakowsky will lead the investigation through a document request and review; open hearings on the history and status of congressional notifications; closed fact-finding hearings to drill down into the circumstances and details of prior notification failures; and interviews with individuals of interest. The final phase and aim is to produce a report on the findings of the investigation.

The investigation is looking into specific instances where Congress was not notified according to the requirements of the National Security Act of 1947. Under the leadership of Rep. Schakowsky, the Intelligence Committee is examining the details of Director Panetta’s June 24th notification, the investigation into the Peru missionary plane shoot down, as well as the destruction of CIA interrogation tapes, interrogation of detainees and other secret programs.

“It is my plan that the investigation report will contain recommendations for reforms to the congressional notification procedures,” said Rep. Schakowsky. “Through the deliberate and careful examination of past notification failures, the Committee can better identify the source of the problem. The Committee and the Congress then has the opportunity to correct the law and make revisions to ensure that we can fulfill our oversight mission.”

Prior to the launch of the investigation, Chairman Silvestre Reyes, D-TX, consulted with Ranking Member Pete Hoekstra, R-MI, about the scope and framework of this investigation. As the Chairman and Rep. Schakowsky announced back in July, the investigation will focus on whether the Executive Branch kept the Committee fully and currently informed of significant intelligence activities, or anticipated significant intelligence activities as required by the National Security Act.

In an effort to make the investigation as transparent as possible, Chairman Reyes and Rep. Schakowsky aim to keep investigation and the findings open to the public through holding hearings in open session. Obviously, more sensitive issues will need to be addressed in closed hearings. The closed hearings will serve as fact-finding sessions in the investigation process.

“I’m interested, in making sure that members of the intelligence committee have an opportunity for meaningful input into the most secret and sensitive activities of our government,” said Rep. Schakowsky.”

Currently, documents are being reviewed that will help determine the list of witnesses that will be asked to speak with the committee.